



Maine Department of Conservation
Natural Areas Program

Liatris scariosa (L.) Willd.

Northern Blazing Star

Habitat: Dry grasslands, barrens, and woods openings. [Dry barrens (partly forested, upland)]

Range: Southern Maine to eastern New York, south to New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania.

Phenology: Flowers July - September.

Family: Asteraceae



Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed.

Aids to Identification: A showy purple-flowered perennial growing from a bulb with a basal rosette of lanceolate leaves 0.5-3 cm broad. The numerous, stalked, thistle-like flowers form a loose spike above the linear stem leaves.

Ecological characteristics: *L. scariosa* is most often associated with sand barrens. Most of its stations in Maine are on sandy soil, and the largest Maine population is thriving on a grassland barren which is periodically burned.

Synonyms: Represented in Maine by variety *novae-angliae* Lunell. Formerly known as *Liatris borealis* Nutt.

Rarity of *Liatris scariosa*

State Rank:	S1	Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity or vulnerability to extirpation.
New England Rank:	Division 1	Globally rare plant occurring in New England. Only a few occurrences exist within the region.
Global Rank:	G5?T3	Species demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally (uncertain). Subspecies rare or uncommon.

Status of *Liatris scariosa*

Federal Status:	None	No Federal Status.
State Status:	Threatened	Rare and, with further decline, could become endangered; or federally listed as Threatened. Listing criteria met:



- ▲ Historical (before 1982)
● Recent (1982 - present)

Known Distribution in Maine:

This rare plant has been documented from a total of 7 town(s) in the following county(ies): York.

Dates of documented observations are: 1896, 1916, 1922, 1934, 1976, 1986, 1993, 1996 (2), 2000

Reason(s) for rarity:

At northern limit of range, habitat limited. Research indicates that high levels of seed predation by a small moth may be a factor in declining populations rangewide.

Conservation considerations:

Controlled fire or prescribed burns may be an important management tool for northern blazing star. Fires control seed predator abundances and encourage recruitment of juvenile plants into resident populations.

The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 13 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species,
please contact the Natural Areas Program
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

